

The Female Preacher.

BEING AN
ANSWER

To a late Rude and Scandalous
WEDDING-SERMON,

Preach'd by

Mr. JOHN SPRINT, *May the 11th, at Sherburn,*
in Dorsetshire:

Wherein that *Levite* is Expos'd as he deserves.

By a Lady of Quality.

—Hanc etiam Mæcenæ aspicere partem.

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*Reflections on a late Rude and Disingenious
Discourse, &c.*

BEING presented with the Book I am now going to consider, by a Gentleman who I am sure was very far in it from the Design of the Author; I took the liberty to pass a few Remarks on so singular and extraordinary a piece; tho' some think it beyond the bounds of *Female* Patience to peruse it. But (like a jealous Husband) I was willing to know all against our selves, especially that so celebrated an Author can produce. And indeed; when I had follow'd him to the end of the Chapter, I could not but wonder to find a Sex attack'd from the Pulpit with more confident Impudence than ever they were on the Stage, tho' with far less Wit and Ingenuity. When I had in as little time as Patience turn'd over all those bitter Leaves, tho' I easily found his Design, yet for my Heart I could never once find the strength of the Arguments by which he endeavours to drive it; so that after all I think a resolute and headstrong *Yea* or *Nay* would have done as well altogether. Hereupon I laid aside the Book as a most self-confuting piece, till I found that Miracles were not ceased, and that some People were so charm'd with it, that they thought it worth their while to teize every poor Woman they met with it. Upon this I began to have some Design of taking Arms, and alariming the whole Power of Females against him. But upon second thoughts I resolv'd to save them the trouble, and enter into a single Combat with this great *Goliath*, this Man of mighty Fame.

As humble thoughts as I have of my self, I began to be afraid that he would think himself honour'd by an Antagonist, and conclude for certain that there must needs be some mighty force in his Arguments if any Resistance was made. But at last considering his haughty Temper, and knowing 'twas impossible he should have greater thoughts of his last piece than he has already; I began to lay aside that fear, and only expected that he would fancy himself the Emperor of the Moon, and whoever writes against him to be one of the little snarling Animals that are angry at its Light and Glory. 'Tis not the first time a Woman has appear'd in Publick, and 'twill be hard for any to accuse us for taking up Weapons since they are only defensive, and we are provok'd into the Field by so great and honourable a Champion. Besides, the itch of being in Print which the Men have infected us with, and the Glory of having but lifted up a Pen against so great a Man, must needs be a sufficient Excuse beyond all Reply.

But you may easily imagine, notwithstanding all these Thoughts and strong Resolutions, how I began to tremble when I came within sight of the Enemy, and perceiv'd with what a Front he appear'd! Not *Don Quixot* was more fear'd at the first sight *Giant Caraculambo*. However the grea-

ter Danger, the greater Honour: So on I went with a mighty Courage till I came within the reach of him, and began the Battel, which if it be not orderly and well pitch'd, 'tis owing to the motions of the Enemy, whom I must follow up Hill and down Hill till he comes to the same place again.

To begin therefore with his *forlorn Hope*; he tells the World in his Preface that we may easily see cause enough to believe 'twas design'd for the Pulpit, not for the Press. No, certainly, he meant no such thing at all as to Affront the Ladies in Publick: And indeed he must be possess'd of very strange Thoughts, and exceeding vain in his Imagination, that could hope to do the least good by such a Discourse from the Pulpit, and yet much vainer to hope it from the Press. And yet that very Reason which should have deterr'd him for ever from the least thought of Preaching, at this rate is made an Excuse why he should Print. It hath, he says, *so fallen out* (and that one half-blind might have seen before-hand) *that the Doctrine therein contained is unhappily represented to the World by some ill-natur'd Females*. Now by the way, this is a very pleasant Invention for any well-dispos'd Person to get into the World by: 'Tis but to utter some Doctrine or other that a Man may be sure before-hand will be justly spoken against; and because 'tis unhappily represented by some ill natur'd People, away to Mr. B---y's of *Bristol* with it; or any other Printer that has no other Business but Mountebanks Bills, Wedding-Sermons, and Ballads, with such other honourable things; and so immediately set up for an Author, and expect that every one should compliment him on the occasion. Aye, and this is a most clover excuse too for a second and third Edition with Additions, &c. So that if this Reverend Gentleman should have the Mortification to find at *Christmas* that some *ill-natur'd Females* had been so spiteful and Profane as to have put his excellent Discourse at the bottom of minc'd Pies; he may hereupon tell the World, that they have found out a wicked way to obscure the Glory of so dread an Author; and therefore for this and many other Reasons *him thereunto moving*, he resolves to reprint it, and 'tis no hard matter to prophecy with what Success. But that it may not be thought that I suppose the Author has not purchas'd that Reputation which he deserves, and which he seems to be so very apprehensive of, when he talks so Prophetically of purchasing the *Character of a dull Blockhead*, I think it will without much dispute be granted that his Words were ominous; only this I must add, that Dulness and Malice are commonly very neat Companions, and help one another at a dead list: And yet he hopes he says (good Gentleman!) that he shall avoid the imputation of Impudence; yet, tho' it be by one of the grossest Instances of it that a Person of his Character is capable of. As a proof of which in the next Words, he makes Proclamation, *Be it known unto all Men that I have not met with one Woman among all my accusers, whose Husband is able to give her the Character of a Dutiful and Obedient Wife*. And this also is a most infallible way of defending any thing in the World, Just so, when the Doctrine of Passive Obedience and Non-resistance was cry'd up and down with

a mighty Confidence, 'twas but to say that all that spoke against this Doctrine were disloyal and rebellious, and the business was compleatly done and ended, and needed no further Confirmation. So, because the Ladies can't bear so harsh and imperious a Doctrine as his is, therefore it shall be a Justification of his Doctrine that they cannot, and prov'd to be reasonable because 'tis intollerable. Strong thoughts! a mighty Argument! especially if we consider that the Husbands he speaks of, 'tis likely, measure the Duties of their Wives by the boundless Limits which this Gentleman has laid out for them; and if so, no wonder if they are not able to give them the Character of Dutyful and Obedient Wives.

Then he tells us, That *good Wives are not offended with his Discourse*; now by *good Wives* he certainly means such as he describes, and then no wonder they say not much against him, since a word against his Doctrine is enough to purchase them a very rough and unwelcome Salutation from their *Lords and Masters*. But I believe it will be no hard task to make a Catalogue of very good Wives who have censur'd him as an Instrument of Oppression and Tyranny to others, tho' they themselves are not under it. However, he is in a good humour for once, and tells us he'll promise us to say as much to the Men (I'll forgive him if he does) *when this Discourse of his has reform'd imperious Wives*. Now, this is a most dexterous turn, and has very much in it; and supposing his Notions to be ever so just and reasonable, yet hereby he'll excuse himself from ever publishing any thing for the Instruction of *Mankind* how to behave themselves towards us, for doubtless there are and will be still some imprudent and unreasonable Creatures on both sides. Now as he makes this a Reason why he will not speak to the Men; so if he had began with them, he might have made it a Reason why he would never have vouchsafed to dictate to the Women.

In the conclusion of his Preface he begins a Triumph, tho' it may not seem a very proper place for it, especially considering the Foundation on which he grounds it. He finds, he says, *upon the whole that 'tis Womens Guilt that puts 'em to so much pain which they feel in their Consciences, for which he knows no better an Antidote* (you must know he has an insight into Physick) *than a speedy Repentance and Reformation*: Very well! but I wonder how he came to know that the Women feel such pain in their Consciences, for I suppose very few will make him their Father Confessor. This Gentleman has a most absolute way to discipline his Consort; if she ever is uneasy at any of his Impositions, 'tis but for him to tell her, this is a Pain in her Conscience, and then the spiritual *Antidote* is whatever he shall command her to repent of or reform. But the Conclusion is bolder than all; he is not contented to make them bear the Cross, and suffer Persecution in this Life, but he tells them, these things shall pursue them to Judgment. But under favour, he must first of all persuade us that what he says is *Jura Divina*, before he can fright any of us with a Purgatory hereafter, for not being willing to endure a Hell upon Earth while we are here.

I shall make but one Remark more on his Preface, and the strength of the Arguments he makes use of. As to his Sermon, he has this to say for

it, that 'twas not design'd for the Preface; so that 'tis to be expected that the Preface which certainly was design'd for it, should be much more strong and labour'd than his careless Discourse, which he deliver'd from the Pulpit. I have consider'd it, I think, with abundance of Patience and Fairness; so that we may judge by the strength of the Arguments in the one, what we are to expect in the other, which he has attempted to force from these Words, 1 Cor. vii. 34. *But she that is Married, careth for the things of the World, how she may please her Husband.*

This the Author makes the Bottom of his Harrangue; and to give us a taste of his Learning, he tells us (p. 1.) the original meaning of the hard and obscure Word [*careth*] and by a most deep and and doughty Criticism neatly contrives his Doctrine, which makes so very much haste to be at, that he seem to leap quite over the Connexion between the Text and the Argument. The Criticism is this, that the word [*careth*] (take notice Ladies) signifies more than ordinary Care, and implies a dividing of the Mind into divers thoughts; casting this way, and that way, and every way, how to give best Content: that is to say, Fetch and bring, Go, and she goeth; Come, and she cometh; To the Right, to the Left, as you were, and so on. Now to use a hard word, this is a most Etymological Argument, and worthy of Consideration. Thus some Divines tell us the word signifies a dividing, distracting Care; whence at this way of arguing, we might be told that Marriage was a divided distracted Condition, &c. which would not be a Doctrine calculated to increase the number of this Gentleman's Female Profelytes. I could by the same method prove a Doctrine not very pleasing to him: for in the words before, ver. 33. *He that is married careth for the things of the World, how he may please his Wife*; the original word is the very $\mu\epsilon\pi\mu\nu\alpha\tilde{\iota}$ same: therefore I say that a Man ought to divide his Mind, to cast this way, and that way, and every way, how to please and content his Wife, since he tells us this is the true and proper signification of the word, and if it be not, 'tis his own fault. But however, he thinks this one Criticism so great a thing, and has so much in't, that he tells us he can meet with no other verbal Difficulties.

[*Careth for the things of the World, how she may please her Husband*] intimating, according to our Reverend Author's way of arguing, that without the things of the World, a Husband will not be pleas'd, But it seems he was resolv'd that this Point should most clearly spring from his Text.

It is a Duty incumbent on all married Women, to be extraordinary careful to content and please their Husbands. And if they are all such as this Gentleman, how can they choose! From this Doctrine he says he'll faithfully represent the Woman's Duty; and a very faithful Representer he is: and by the way, may not this be the reason, why the celebrated Author of the *Irish Scuffle* gives him the renowned Name of *Fido* in that unparallel'd Book?

Our Author finding that 'twould be look'd upon as a very rude and barborous thing to treat the weak and defenceless Sex with such a Discourse as he had prepar'd for 'em, without saying any thing almost to the other side, and how little it would become the Honour of a

Gentleman, the Gravity of a Minister, or the Charity of a Christian to aggravate the Faults of some and impute them to the Sex, and say every thing imaginable to exasperate the Government (for so let the Husbands be call'd) against them, and never once touch the notorious and visible Faults and Barbarities of a great many *He-Brutes*; he doubtless foresaw this, and therefore before he advanc'd his precious Matter, he thought it necessary to answer an Objection, which he brings in the Women making, and offers at some Reasons why he thought it not all convenient for his purpose (as to be sure it was not) to rip up his own and other Mens Faults, and so condemn himself out of his own mouth.

The first Reason he gives for the leaving out the Masculine part of his Sermon, is *because the Woman's Duty is harder and more difficult than that of the Man*. But I always thought that it was sometimes as difficult for Governours to carry themselves well as for the Governed, and that in some Tempers to avoid Tyranny and unreasonable Commands was as great a Virtue as a vile Submission in a Woman; and therefore I think that Reason vanishes. However I shall take notice by the way, that the Subjection which he thinks belongs to a Woman is a *very hard and difficult thing*, and therefore the Women are the more excusable if they are not always so very much under the Hatches, since he owns they are but of very weak Abilities to learn. *You Women*, says he, *will acknowledge that Men can learn to command and rule fast enough*. Insolent Man! To preach us gravely into Slavery and Chains, and then deride and baptize us, as the *Babylonians* did the *Captive Jews* when they had 'em fast in their power. And not contented with this, he makes the Word of God come in for a share, while he is insulting over us: *Women*, says he, *have need of Line upon Line, Precept upon Precept, here a little and there a little, and all little enough to make them perfect in their Lesson*. Now here is for certain a touch of Antiquity, and some of the true *Veteran Jingle* in *little and little*, and *little enough*.

The Second Reason he brings, is, *Because Women are of weaker Capacities to learn than Men*, p. 5. This is exceeding pleasant indeed. I suppose, if Men were to learn the same Lesson, their Capacities would be as weak. This brings to my Mind the Story of the General, who when he had condemn'd the Soldiers of a conquer'd Garison to leap down from a vast high Tower, one of them going to leap after his dead Companions, made three or four Recoils; and being threatn'd with a more cruel Death by the General, reply'd, I'll give you twice as many times to do it. The Application is easy. According to this Rule, what strange Inferences do naturally follow. Suppose a Master and his Servants, a Lawyer and his Clients, a Physician and its Patients; 'tis you'll say the Duty of these Servants, Clients, and Patients to be govern'd and submit: But a Servant may be abus'd by his Master, a Client cheated and impoverish'd by his Lawyer, and the Patient genteely dispatch'd by his Doctor. Now certainly any Man would be of a *weak Capacity* to endure these things, and therefore the Duties of Servants, Clients, and Patients must be always rung in their

their Ears, and the Duties of Masters, Lawyers and Physicians, never; and who sees not the mighty Force, and feels not the close Girds of so finely an Argument.

His third Reason is, *because according to the Observation that he has made, most of the Distractions and disturbances of a married Life are owing to the Indiscretion and Folly of disobedient Wives.*

Now if this Gentleman has spent the time past of his Life in making these Observations, he may have made a great many in his time, and deserves the Name of the *New Observer*: and then no wonder, having been otherwise employ'd, that his *Lucubrations* produce such Sermons as this on so solemn an occasion. I suppose in his Observations he always happen'd to have the Women on that side he could see clearest, and either knew not or wink'd at the Mens Mismanagements. But suppose it were true that his Observations had furnish'd him with few or none of the Mens Faults, it do's not follow that no ones Observation else has.

However, he has an unquestionable Argument in store, whice is this: *I shall not scruple to affirm (says he) that the number of bad Husbands, which their Wives have made so, is greater by far, than the number of those whom their Wives have found so.* Under which Head he is to be placed, I need not determine. I had heard indeed before of a very short way of proving things, and that is by *strong Affirmation*: And this is an Argument so ready at hand, that it has been his inaccessible Refuge in several places throughout the Book. Yet I think here he has pass'd an *Act of Oblivion* upon himself, and has forgot that he uses this very Argument of *strong Affirmation* in a thing quite contrary to this; when he says of *Eve's Daughters*, or Women in general, that *if they will have Husbands, and have them good, they must take a great deal of Care and Pains to make 'em so*, p. 18. Therefore certainly they find them *very bad* if they must take so much Pains to make them good: And yet here he says, *the number of bad Husbands whom their Wives have found so, is little or nothing compar'd with those they make so.* But the Pages lying at a convenient distance from one another, and hoping it's like of what sort of Readers he was like to have, he might think no notice would be taken of it; or that none would peruse the Book but those that wanted Sense to discover the Mistake. But I am willing to be more merciful to him than he is to us, and shall no further insist on his Failings than to manifest that they are such, and for our own Defence against a Man whose Arguments are like a Two-edg'd Sword, and cut at once two contrary ways.

And therefore I pass on to the fourth Reason; which is, *Because the Love of a Husband does very much depend upon the Obedience of a Wife*, p. 6. If by Obedience he means a servile Subjection, 'tis a very clear Argument, and will be very persuasive no doubt. But if he means only reasonable and generous Compliance, such as is produc'd by the noble and resistless Charms of mutual Love, I grant him 'tis true, *viz.* that the Love of a Husband very much depends on the Love of a Wife. But my Understanding is not so far enlightned, as to see any reason in this why the Wo-

men should be teez'd, and the Men for ever escape. And here again he hath another Paradox, and tells us, That if the Wife becomes *pliant and yielding* (that is, becomes a good easy tractable Slave) *to her Husband's Desire, she then may do e'en what she pleases with him*: Which is as much as to say, If she be a perfect Slave, she may have her Liberty. I shall never be persuaded that such Gentlemen who desire the subjection of their Wives, and are willing to confine them to the treatment of Servants, have any great opinion of their Persons or their Liberty. And yet after all, this Well-bred Gentleman, this Learned Doctor tells us, *We are more afraid than hurt*; and if we are, I am sure 'tis not owing to his Temper, his Wishes, nor his Discourse.

The Fifth and last Reason he names is this: *Because that all he pretends to is to lay our Duty before us*. Very well! But where the Consequence is (supposing this be his true and upright Intention) I can't tell. It's true, I grant him, 'twould prove that we ought to hearken to it; but however, it does not offer any Reason why the other part should not be insisted on: for the self-same Argument would bring the Men upon the Stage. If he had but said, You Gentlemen Husbands, I design to say nothing but *What's your Duty*; This would have been thought a very strange Argument why nothing should be said to us. But so it is, and away he goes with it, and tells us, as for good Wives, *The knowledge and practice of their Duty is so comfortable and pleasant to them, that they are not listed in the number of these Objectors*. And hereby he affirms, that 'tis impossible to be a good Wife, and yet object against the omission of the Mens part; which is a mistake so gross, that it may be felt. And in the midst of all this Goodness and Charity which this Gentleman here professes, he cannot forbear, but breaks out, and says that he wishes *Where there is one good Wife, there were a thousand*; whereby he most uncharitably insinuates, that there is but one in a thousand good. So that if it be as he thinks and says, he has a very strong opinion of himself, to imagine that one single Sermon, with his *poor Endeavours*, (as he expresses it) can make so many bad Women good, when the number of the Bad, according to his Computation, is a thousand to one. These five Reasons he imagins to be so gross, solid, and thick, that he resolves to venture under their shelter in the face of his Female Adversaries: mighty Courage, and an Heroick Attempt! But whether I have not shot this massy fivefold Shield thro' and thro', let the World judge, I mean the just and generous part of it, who have at least Common-sense, and a moderate portion of Ingenuity.

Having thus, like a Man of Valour, and one of the seven Champions, cleared his way thro' all manner of Reasons, Arguments, Objections, Remonstrances, &c. he now again sets up his Standard with this Inscription: *That 'tis a Duty incumbent on all married Women to be extraordinary careful to please their Husbands*, I suppose the Phrase here is something extraordinary and significant; that Expression, *incumbent on married Women*, hath something in it, and he thought it perhaps very suitable to a Nuptial Occasion; and any one that considers with what an Emphasis he pronounc'd

pronounc'd the word [*Incumbens*] will easily judge what sort of Metaphor he intended. and to what he made the Allusion. But however, for once, I shall think it a Duty *incumbent* on me to consider what he says to us, and follow him thro' the whole set of Arguments that he has rang'd in order; and I promise to consider the force and strength of them, and not to conceal any part of it that I can discover. And here in the first place he says, He shall prove it by *Reason and Argument*; which really are two excellent things, when they are well managed. Secondly, He promises to *show how and which way* married Women must endeavour to please their Husbands (*how and which way*, two excellent Heads well explained.) Thirdly, To make some *Improvement* of the whole, *i. e.* to make the best of a bad Matter.

In the first place he comes to his *Reason and Argument*, the first of which is, *That Woman was made for the Comfort and Benefit of Man*. And if so, then 'tis to be granted that Woman answers the end of her Creation, when she does bring Comfort and Benefit to Man; and a very Noble Requital does Man make to her when he follows this Gentleman's Instructions. Now I own 'tis true that Woman was made for the Comfort and Benefit of Man: but I think it a much nobler Comfort to have a Companion, a Person in whom a Man may confide, to whom he can communicate his very Soul, and open his Breast and most inward Thoughts, than to have a Slave sitting at his Footstool, and trembling at every word that comes like Thunder and Lightning from the Mouth of the domestick *Pharaoh*. An honourable and noble Companion was doubtless intened by the wise Creator. *It is not good that Man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him*: Certainly this is meant of a Creature that should be a Social help, not a Servile one. And the Argument he takes from the Woman's being made for the profit of Man, is not so very strong, if we consider the ground upon which it depends, which is, that Man was created first. Now if it had so pleas'd the Eternal Father to have made the Woman first, then because Man was made last, tho' he be, as he thinks, the nobler Creature, yet by this Argument he had been to have taken *Extraordinary* Care to please his Wife. Now there are some Divines that tell us, that in the Frame of this lower World God proceeded from the less, to the more perfect; and therefore, according to them, the Woman's being created last will not be a very great Argument to debase the Dignity of the Female Sex. If some of the Men do own this, 'tis more likely to be true: The Great *Milton*, a very grave Author, brings in *Adam* thus speaking to *Eve*, in his *Paradise lost*, lib. 9.

O fairest of Creation! last and best
Of all GOD's Works —————

'Tis granted the Woman was created for the Man, but we deny that this is any pretence to use the limited Power which Heaven has given him to the Unhappiness and Ruine of a Creature that was made for him. If the

the Scripture tells us, That tho' the Beasts are made for Man, yet a good Man is Merciful to his Beast; much more regard is there to be had of a nobler Creature, which tho' inferior in Brutal Strength of Body, yet in Strength and Beauty of Reason (when cultivated) equals the Superior Sex. It's true, a Woman that abridges her Husband of his reasonable Authority, and has Impudence enough to put on the Breeches, does certainly pervert the end of her Creation; and such, without any Defense, I leave to the Mercy of this Gentleman, and the Discipline their Husbands think fit to exercise upon them.

Tho' Women are for the Comfort and Benefit of Men, yet that's no reason why they should be their most obedient Slaves and Vassals. I suppose the Author will grant that Men are to be for the *Comfort and Benefit* of Women; and yet the Consequence will not be allow'd, that therefore Man is to *cast this away, and that way, and every way, how to please his Wife.*

The Second Argument he brings is, P. 12. *Because by the Woman's occasion the Man was ruin'd and undone.* 'Tis true both Sexes have reason to remember the first Apostacy from God with all imaginable regret; but I never heard or read that there was a particular Original Sin imputed to the Woman, and another to the Man. I thought Learned Men had held that Original Guilt was convey'd alike to both Sexes, however it be explain'd, which I pretend not to do, only following his Argument, which supposes the Imputation of Original Sin. And certainly it must be granted that *Adam* was guilty of a very great Crime, to hearken to a Woman more than his God, and let go his Innocence upon the Word of a guilty Creature. And if it be true, as some of the Divine tell us, That the Woman was created with less noble Faculties of Mind, weaker Judgment, and duller Thoughts, no wonder that she was more obnoxious to the Tempter, and that she fell first of all: He that, according to them, had the greater Strength, must of Consequence stand longer. But, according to this Argument driven home, all the barbarous Actions, Wickedness and Rebellion committed in former Ages, must be imputed to this Age; and they must suffer for it. So that I don't argue for our Mother *Eve* to defend her Transgression, but to shew the unreasonableness of the Inference from it. All the other Sex sprang from her as well as we, and are therefore, I think, equally guilty of her Transgression; and I would be glad to see any one strongly prove, that because we are of the same Sex, therefore that Sin is imputed to us more than the Men. Besides this, I think 'tis beyond doubt, that tho' the Women had retained her Innocence, yet it had not been impossible for the Man to have transgressed: for tho' he was a happy Creature, yet not being immutable, but left to himself and the Power he had given him from Heaven, he might have fallen singly, and by himself.

All this, I think, something lessens the force of the Argument; and it has not so sharp an edge as our Adversary would threaten us with. And as to that place he quotes out of *Timothy*, [1 Tim. 2. 14.] I think there the Apostle speaks of Womens Learning in silence and subjection, and not

usurping

surpassing Authority over the Man. This they'll own to be their Duty; or they are not ambitious of the Revenues of the Church, nor envy any Man the Glory, especially of such Sermons as this I am now considering. However, since it has pleased God so far to repair the Honour of our Sex, to send a *Saviour* into the World by means of a Woman, methinks that should more than recompense for the Consequences of the other, since we are told that the Happiness we are advanced to by the Second *Adam*, is much more great and certain than that which the First possess'd. And if God has so far pardon'd the fatal Transgression of the Woman, it looks little too bold and revengeful for Man to pretend not to do it, but to exact so many unreasonable things on this pretence. Nay, a late Learned Man, whom I suppose the Author honours, has on the Verse following in *Timothy*, these words, *viz.* That by a Woman a Saviour came into the World, which is some *Reparation of the honour of the Sex*. Now this coming from a Man, and one that was known not to be bias'd by any Passion for Woman, it is the more noted and singular a Confession.

Then he tells us that God impos'd this Task upon her as a punishment for seducing her Husband. (Very true!) *And thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee, Gen. 3. 16.* And the Comment on this is very admirable indeed: Wherein is implied, says he, *not only Submission to him in obeying his Commands, but it reacheth farther to the bringing under unto him the very Desires of her Heart to be regulated by him so far, that it should not be lawful for her to will or desire what she herself liked, but only what her Husband should approve and allow.* P. 13.

I suppose this good Gentleman believes that these words contain part of the Curse for the primitive Trespass; and by consequence he thinks it the Duty of a Man to execute the Curse of God upon his Wife. But let us try the Consequence which he makes, and see if the Thread of the Argument is not stretch'd very far. Suppose that be the meaning of the words, That our Sex shall have an universal desire to theirs (tho' I believe if they were all such obliging Sparks as the Author, 'twould cure them of their Passion quickly) yet it no way follows (with submission to the ruling Judgment of the Men) that therefore it shall not be lawful for her to will or desire any thing but what her Husband approves of; I think in some cases 'tis an Impossibility. Let it be granted that 'tis the part of a Woman, being the weaker Vessel, to submit, and learn as well as she can the hard Lesson of *passive Obedience*; yet I defy the meekest Woman in the World, if she meets with an unreasonable, imperious, domineering, insolent Creature, I defy such a Lady, with all her Virtue and Patience, to forbear *wishing* at least were otherwise: No, she must not, our Author tells us, never groan, never sigh for a happy deliverance from her hated Chains. But to use the same Phrase, suppose, I say, my desire is towards my Friend; does it therefore follow that I must necessarily with nothing whatever till I know 'tis agreeable to her Humors? But by vertue of his Office, this Gentleman can interpret *this way, and that way, and every way.*

'Tis to be consider'd upon this Head, That whatever was pronounc'd

in general then, can't be apply'd to every individual now. For instance (with modesty be it spoken) the Curse of Child-birth, which God may be thought to have denounc'd on the whole Sex, we are told some entire Nations have escaped, as the Great *Montaign* tells in his *Essays* (I think) *Liv. 1. Ch. 14.*

And with like force of Reason might it be concluded, that because God hath curst the Ground, and said it shall bring forth *Briars and Thorns*; therefore it is utterly unlawful to root them out, and sinful to possess any Ground but what is overgrown with them. The Country People would quickly discern the force of such Reasoning in spite of all their Duties. So that tho' we grant this to be the truest sense of the place, yet it does not follow that the very Desires, and every Desire of the Heart of a Woman, must be according to the will and pleasure of the Man *this way, that way, and every way.* But if I should meet this Gentleman out of the Pulpit, with his hands ty'd behind him, and his Cane secur'd (that he might not use that method of Conviction which he thinks proper for a Woman) I would humbly presume to tell him there is a far other meaning of the Place, and that not a late Fancy, but a very aptient Translation. The LXX (and they were all of his own Sex) take it thus, and thy *Refuge or Recourse* [απορροη] *shall be to thy Husband*; he shall be thy Refuge in Dangers. This old *Egyptian* Translation no question he knew well enough; and I suppose some will make bold to think it more easy and natural than the forc'd Construction, and unconscionable meaning he puts upon the words. Methinks it should suffice that the Women don't contradict their Lords and Masters; that they tamely submit, and bear with patience what is impos'd on them: No, unless they are enamour'd of their Miseries, and the very desires of their Hearts brought under, and in subjection, they are threaten'd in our Author's Preface with Judgment and Damnation. This is a Tyranny, I think, that extends farther than the most absolute Monarchs in the World; for if they can but fill their Gallies with Slaves, and chain them fast to the Oar, they seldom have so large a Conscience to expect they should take any great pleasure in their present Condition, and that the very *Desires of their Hearts* should strike an Harmony with the clattering Musick of their Fetters. Certainly, he said very true when he told us, That Women were of *weak Abilities to learn*, as they must needs have so hard and impossible a Task.

Yet after all this he acknowledges in plain words, that *since the Fall, Man is grown more humourfom and hard to be pleas'd*, which (tho' he feelingly knows it) he would never have own'd, if he had not design'd to make even that an Argument against us: For, says he, *'tis not the Woman's pleading that her Husband is hard to be pleased that will excuse her*; no, tho' it be impossible for an incarnate Angel to bring him into a good Humour, and cure him of his frowardness. And if the impossibility of a thing be not an excuse, I know not what is; yet I suppose there are some Instances to be given of such Tempers. This may, he says, be a *Memento to her of her original Guilt*; and why may not the Humours, and unsufferable

ferable Passions of some Men be a *Memento* to them of theirs too? But however, he is resolv'd to advance an unheard of Notion, That the Ill-humours of some Men, and the difficulty of pleasing them, is a Motive to the Women to endeavour to please them: A very strong Motive, no doubt; and 'tis very strange he recommends it to the World, unless he has found it a mighty obligation to Obedience in his own virtuous Consort. This is a very fine touch indeed: If Moroseness and Ill-humour be a very good and great motive to Obedience, then the higher degree of it the greater Motive; and so more barbarous and cruel any Husband is, the more a Woman ought to respect, and love, and rejoyce in him. Precious Doctrine, no doubt! and easily believ'd by every one who has once cast off those foolish things call'd *Liberty*, *Reason*, and *Common-sense*. What he says of the happy Temper and charming Sovereignty of *Adam*, and the Good-humour of the first and best Husband was always in, seems only mention'd with a spiteful design to grate upon the Minds of the tender Sex, and vex them with the Comparison between what Man is now, and what he was then: for immediately he repeats it over again, *Man's Temper now is harsh and severe, and his Humours troublesom and tedious*. He seems here to speaking general, as if he either thought all Men furnish'd with those excellent Talents of Severity, and troublesom Humours (which if he has attain'd, I wish him much comfort in them) or else endeavour'd to infuse such into them. It looks a little uncharitable to his own Sex, among whom yet I hope he cannot find so many as he imagins, whose Humours are so very troublesom and tedious; for there are some great and generous Minds that scorn to take pleasure in the Miseries of a poor feeble Woman: tho' he is of another Mind, and thinks that the necessity of using a great deal of *Art and Skill*, *Diligence and Industry*, and various Methods in order to please a Husband, is a truth experienced by most Women, P. 17. And then he falls a raking afresh in the sacred Ashes of his Mother *Eve*, (whom we hope God has pardon'd, and so should he too) and tells us, *we may thank her for it*: and that now, if any of her Daughters will have Husbands, and have them good, they must take a great deal of care and pains to make them so. But if I can persuade those poor tame Souls he talks of, such sort of Men shall enjoy their Humours by themselves, and all the Care and Pains he talks of all shall be saved, and bestowed on some thing that better deserves it: For after their Care and Pains, they'll be nobly rewarded no doubt, and such Husbands will still say, that all their Humours and Moroseness are little enough to make a poor Slave perfect in her Lesson.

The Third Reason he gives is, *Because upon the doing or neglecting of this, the Happiness, or Misery of a married Life does depend*: and what then? Because such a state of Life cannot be very happy, unless both endeavour to make it so, therefore the Woman must be a Slave; therefore her Desires must be brought under, that she must not wish for better usage, for that's his meaning, P. 13. and in that latitude I understand him all along, when he speaks of the Woman's Duty to her Husband. And here for once (that he might not be guilty himself of any Complement to our Sex).

Sex) he makes a Quotation, or at least brings it out with a [*Say one*] which will do as well, and tells us, that Women are indeed very bright and shining Creatures: *A good Wife should be like a Mirror* (a wonderful Discovery, that a Woman should be so exactly like a Looking-glass!) But mark the Design of it in the following words; *Which has no Image of its own, but receives its Stamp and Image from the Face that looks into it.* Now by this Rule, whenever 'tis a frowning, peevish, fretful stormy Face, that looks into this Glass, the Mirrour must send back the very same again, or else 'twill be a false Glass. She must, he says, *rejoyce when he rejoyces*, (ay most certainly, tho' it be in abusing her, and doing all he can to make her Life a Torment to her, tho' it be in caressing her Rival to her Face) *and grieve and be troubled, when he is offended and vexed.* No doubt on't! he is here in the right; the most patient Woman in the World would grieve, and be troubled, when some Men are offended and vexed: So that 'tis plain he would never have passed this Complement of a Looking-glass on us, if he had not intended it as an Argument for, or at least Illustration of our Misery. But now he begins to recollect some of his former Courtship and Gallantry, and tells us a very fair Story indeed, that if we will follow his Advice, we should obtain *even what we will of our Husbands; and that such Wives would be sooner tired in making their Requests than their Husbands in granting.* (Dear, Tender, Charming Sir!) But here I shroudly suspect, to solve this, it must be remembred, that the Women he means that endeavours, in his *Extraordinary* sense, to please their Husbands, will not dare to make any request, but such as they know before-hand are according to their Husbands minds; no, their very Desires must be in subjection; and so there is no great danger of their Husbands tiring with granting their Requests, when according to him the Women must not desire to form one Petition to their Husbands. By this Interpretation that he has helpt me to, we may easily judge of his meaning in all those kind Expressions which he hath upon this occasion. The rest of this Head he spends in the Description of a compleat *Billingfare*, and here he fights with the Wind; for every one of any sober Reason or handsome Education, will scorn to spend such Language on a good Husband, and on a bad one 'tis to no purpose; and if this Gentleman has lived where there are so many Examples of this kind, let him Petition the Government for an augmentation of *Ducking-stools*, and let him solace himself, and puench his Rage with seeing the Watry-punishment executed upon them; and I know none will rescue the Offenders out of his hands.

I heartily pity the poor Gentleman he mentions, p. 22. who had so very tender a Heart, that the Breath of a Woman shatter'd it in pieces; and indeed he has done very well to leave his Memory to Posterity, since in this Iron Age there are few Examples of so tender Spirits as to be capable of such dreadful execution from the Tongue of a Woman. He would make the World believe that most of our Sex are very *Mother Damnbles*, and always ringing the Bells backwards in their Husbands Ears, P. 6 But the Gentleman he mentions was doubtless a Man of a very tender and delicate Composition, such as is not now a-days to be found. He

He gives a very pleasant Reason, why an undartful Wife is so very terrible a thing, P. 23. Because *all Evils, & Elements, are most troublesome out of their proper places; as Profaneness in Ministers, Injustice in Judges, and Discomfort in a Wife.* Now this way of Talking seems to imply, that Profaneness and Injustice in some Persons, look very well, and are in their proper places; by which what he intends is beyond my weak Ability to learn. If his Meaning be good, I am sure his Utterance and Expression are not very proper here; but however, 'twas done with an upright Intention, and a Design to bring down the *Desires* of all Womens hearts into Subjection to the *High and Mighty Sex*.

As to the Proverb of *Solomon* he quotes, there is no doubt of the truth of it, nor his Comment upon it; but really I can see no great Piety nor Ingenuity in that Sentence he has from his *Pious and Ingenious Author*; *That 'tis a hundred pities the Tongues of such Shrews had not as many blisters as their Jaws have Teeth; and 'tis never better with their Husbands than when they are hoarse.* If this be not *Biltingate* of the coarsest Alloy, I know not what is; only coming from the Pulpit, 'tis sanctified, and becomes a very Pious and Ingenious Saying. What he says in the Conclusion of this Part of his Discourse, That a clamorous and turbulent Wife, that spits Passion and Poison, is a Torment to her self and her Husband, is a most undoubted Truth, and they are justly Self-tormentors: only this I must add, That I think there needs no farther Torment for a Woman, than only being oblig'd, on pain of Damnation, to bring under her very *Desires* to the unaccountable Humours of a wild and giddy Fop, who becomes more insolent by Submission, and grows more intolerable by being born with.

Thus I have followed this Courteous Gentleman thro' all the pleasant Paths he hath here laid down for us. The next thing he tells us, is, how and which way married Women should endeavor to please their Husbands: And here he pitches on three very Canonical Heads, *Love, honour, and obey*: And tells us a very learned Story, that he hath heard some Women say, They never would nor did repeat the sacred Words; and that if he had been to officiate, he would have kept them to the Text, or make them lie alone all their days, to their unspeakable Terror and Afrightment. This is a fine Period to be delivered from a Pulpit! but being set off with a vehement Accent and a very earnest Delivery, it passed no doubt very well, and mightily affected the Auditory. I am not about to quarrel with the Compilers of the Liturgy, only I shall take notice, that they were *Men* who had a hand in it, and by consequence would not omit the binding our sex as fast as possible: But 'tis also observ'd, that those words [*With my body I thee worship*] if they have any meaning in them, can never be applied to such a sort of Creature as is a Slave, tho' our Author should cast his mind *this way, and that way, and every way*, to pervert the Sense of them.

He tells us, That every married Woman, in order to please her Husband, ought to love him. A notable Discovery! and who ever doubted

or denied it? But, however, a Man must be a person of extraordinary Merit, all Love and Kindness, and a thousand good Properties, to bring a Woman to that extravagant height of Passion, as to be contented and pleas'd, tho' *all the World besides were annihilated*, P. 28. And he seems to suggest some odd unlucky thing or other in this Matrimony, which gives a very strong temptation to the poor Ladies to be discontented as soon as ever they come under the Yoke; and accordingly he says, by all means a Woman, *newly married especially*, is to avoid all occasion of Disference with her Husband; and to this purpose makes a very grave and learned Oration out of *Plutarch*, for the edification of the Auditory, concerning his acquaintance with the antient Fathers; for so, it may be, he supposes, that at least we poor ignorant Souls do think and know no better. Now by his pressing so obvious and uncontested a Matter with such vehemence, it looks as if he had a mind to represent us as a Generation of Vipers, that, as soon as ever any charitable Man is so kind as to lodge us poor willing Creatures in his Bosom, immediately sting him to death.

Then he breaks out into the most scurrilous and ungenteel Language imaginable [P. 30, & 31.] and tells the World that young Women before Marriage do all they can to engage the Affections of a Husband; so that in their Looks, Dress, and Behaviour, you may read *Come love me*. Very coming and easy Creatures! Certainly if they were so very willing, abundance of little Arts which the Men use, might very well be spared. 'Tis very easy for any *Knight-Errant* to fancy himself happy, and that some great Lady loves him most desperately, if she is but civil in her Behaviour, cleanly in her Dress, and has an Air of Candour; especially if she happens to smile, tho' it be at his follies. And according to this Rule, the Author should have made a more civil Return to the Sex; for I doubt not but he has read *Come love me*, many a time, if this does express it. But is it not the vanity of the Men that makes the Women (if any of them are so vain) to use those petty Arts he here sets down? I hope this Gentleman does not speak by experience, when he says, That as soon as ever they are married, their pleasant Looks are turned into *Frowns*, and the Neatness of their Dress into *Sluttry*, &c. Notwithstanding all this, there are some Ladies not so very easy of Access, but hold out desperately against all the Arts of the undermining Sex, and the pulling Lovers cannot spell *Come love me*, till they have given some very remarkable proofs of their Integrity; which, if they prove afterwards to be but Shams, are not very contemptible Temptations to the New-married Woman to blot out the Impressions of undeserv'd Love, which Hypocrisy only had made in her Heart.

But in my Observation (for let me bring that as an Argument as he does his, I have found very few, if any Women, who have had obliging and respectful Husbands (for that's his own Phrase P. 20.) that have begun first to withdraw their Affections, as some have done, no question, who by the undiscoverable Arts of designing Men have been betray'd, and afterwards slighted to the utmost degree. But it becomes those who are guilty them-

selves

selves, to talk at this huffing rate, and silence all complaints by the impudent Accusations they bring against those they injure. Thus he talks and raves, like one that has forgotten Common Civility, and the generous Education of the Men of his Coat; and concludes this Head with a very *Wooden simile*, for the Instruction and Edification of all well-meaning Carpenters and Joiners, viz. *That when two Boards are first glued together, a small matter will loosen them* (especially such a confounded Jog as the Author gives us) *but if carefully lookt to till they are well fastened, and the Glue be hardened, 'twill not be an easy matter to disjoin or sever them.* A most instructing Similitude! and the truth of which hath been confirm'd by very many Witnesses of good Credit, as they are ready to attest. Either the Auditory he preach'd this to were Persons of very *wooden Understandings*, or else they were in danger of apprehending the Comparison to be very much akin to the Author.

Then he tell us, Married Women are to please their Husbands by *honouring them* (by all means, Honour to whom Honour is due.) But I think he goes a little too far, when he makes it a Woman's Duty to lie like a Spaniel at her Husband's Feet, and suffer her self very civilly to be trampled on: This he intimates by the Authentic story of the *Persian Ladies*, who had the *similitude of a Foot on the top of their Coronets*, P. 14. and by the bold and insolent Comment he makes on it. Now this you know is a most clear and *Oriental Argument*, and proves just as much as the strongest *Hieroglyphicks of Egypt*. Is it impos'd upon them, or do they wear it willingly? If the former, where's the Virtue? If the latter, I can hardly think it proves what he would persuade us, unless the Gentlemen of *Persia* are very obliging indeed. Here again we see very clearly what this Gentleman would be at: A Woman, when once she is enter'd within the Grates, and the Parson has turn'd the Key upon her, is no longer to look on her self as a Companion, but the highest place she can expect is to be trodden under foot. This is the height of Glory, this is the Advancement our Sex is to meet with, if all Men were of such wonderful Temper, and noble Principles, as this our trusty and well-belov'd Friend is. And under this Head he confesses something (in my opinion) not much to his Design: For, says he, the Apostle calls the Woman the *Glory of the man*, because 'tis an high Honour to him that so *Excellent a Creature as a Woman* should be his Inferior. But if a Woman, according to this honest Confession be so Excellent a Creature, then hence I think it may very fairly be infer'd, that some acknowledgment is due to a Woman when she condescends to make her self inferior to any of them. And can it be the Glory of a Man to trample upon, and enslave, and render the Life of such an Excellent Creature as miserable as he can? And here he intimates that we take a great deal of freedom in our Thoughts. Certainly if we had not freedom there, we were very Slaves, and even that he would abridge of (not that I think a Woman may harbor any wicked Thoughts of her Lord and Master;) But 'tis very hard, and a strange Doctrine indeed, that they must not be allow'd to have contemptible Thoughts, no not of Per-

sons and Things that are in themselves contemptible to the last degree. The Instance of *Michal* is quite another case; for there was the business of Religion in it, she despis'd *David* 'tis like for putting on the Linnen *Ephod*, and summitted to meddle with sacred things as he did. However, if any of the Husbands are such brave and generous Men, of such obliging Principles, and such mighty Charms as *David* had, I think their Wives will find it a very difficult matter so much as to despise them in their Hearts. Reverence and Love are not things infus'd into our Breasts by hard words, high menaces, and huffing Language; that dear and tender Esteem is won by the Charms of an agreeable Temper, the instances of a Noble Generosity, and those other powerful things which 'tis impossible to resist, and which will always secure Honor and Reverence from very Strangers, much more in those who have the happiness of so intimate a Relation.

Then he tells us, Besides this Internal there must be an External Honor; and that a Woman must use those Titles which may express the Dignity and Excellency of her Husband's Person. But suppose a poor Lady should meet with a Spark that is not at all Dignify'd or Distinguish'd from the common herd of Mankind, that hath no Virtue, no Excellency to be commended for, that is of a base, ungenerous and sordid Spirit; yes, she must give him those Titles which may bespeak the Dignity and Excellence of his Person! i. e. she must banter him to his Face, and provoke every one to reflect upon his real Faults, by attempting to cover them with the vain Names of imaginary Dignity. He brings the Example of *Sarah* calling *Abraham* Lord. But it must be consider'd that *Abraham* was indeed a great Man, and rich; and that it would look a little odd for a Man of low Degree to be greeted, *My Lord, your Lordship's most obedient Servant*, &c. by his Lady in a blew Apron, or a High-crown'd Hat. And by the way, he has lost a most admirable Argument (which runs thus, according to the way of arguing by the *Persian Shoo*) in *England* the Women many of them (in that part however where he is) wear the similitude of a Steeple on their Heads, implying by the like Consequence, that Churchmen are particularly privileg'd to lord it over their Wives. This would have been a home-thrust, and most pertinent to the matter in hand, for 'twould have invest'd his Brother Dear (whom he then married) with full Power and Authority to trample upon, and lead captive the deluded Sister. But to return from this Digression (which I have made only to let him see wherein he has fail'd) 'tis to be consider'd that the *Apostles* might injoy more than ordinary Submission in the Primitive Times, that so by their humble Carriage they might charm their Husbands into a love of Christianity. *What knowest thou, O Wife, whether thou shalt save thy Husband?* says *St. Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 7. 16. But I shall never believe they design'd such a Government for the Men as this Gentleman and his Followers would soon erect.

Then he bitterly inveighs against one of the most innocent things in the World, at Womens calling their Husbands by their *Christian Names*, and their using familiar Terms one to another. This is certainly the effect

effect of Tenderness and Freedom, which will banish all the Names of haughty Distance and servile Subjection. And his Consequence is very harsh and disingenuous; that therefore they esteem them but as their *Servants*, because they use such familiar Titles; and complains bitterly that some will call them by the solemn Names of *Fool, Stoven, Clown, Sor, &c.* I hope he never gives his Lady any occasion to bestow any of these venerable Titles upon his Worship. But what if so strange a thing should happen that a Man should be really a Fool, must a Woman call him *Solomon*? If he be a Stoven, or a Clown, or a Sor, must she cry him up for a spruce, genteel, sensible, and Temperate Man? Yes! she must give him those Titles that do imply the *Dignity and Excellence of his Person*, which in some Men I am sure the Titles of Clown and Sor do fully express. They may modestly remember the Infirmities of their Husbands, and yet not usurp their Authority, tho' they forget the Title of *Lord and Master*.

Now (that I may give one bold stroke for once) to prove that 'tis not always such an unpardonable Crime for a Woman to call her Husband by an ungrateful Name, on some just, great, and necessary occasion, I shall produce him an Instance very suitable to a Man of his Profession, and that is of an *Abigail*. *Nabal* was a foolish Churl; now according to Mr. *Crape*, his Wife *Abigail* must givee him the Titles suitable to the *Dignity and Excellence of his Person*, which we find she does: Her words to *David* are, *Let not my Lord, I pray thee, regard this Man of Belial, even Nabal: for as is his Name, so is he; Nabal is his Name, and Folly is with him, 1 Sam. 25. 25.* Hence (with submission) I infer, that if an *Abigail* does meet with a *Nabal*, a Man of *Belial*, a *Fool*, a *Sor*, 'tis not in all cases an unpardonable Sin to call him so; not that a bad Man's Failings are to be insisted on upon every occasion, tho' a modest Repetition of them be sometimes necessary, as in this case, for Self-preservation, which old-fashion'd Principle this modish Gentleman would fain have us cast away for ever and ever.

So that 'tis hence very plain, That as the Scripture hath recorded some Instances of the profound, and deserv'd Respect that Men of noble Minds have obtain'd from their Wives; so on the other hand, where Husbands deserve such untowards Names as this Gentleman complains of, 'tis something difficult to conceive how the Women of moderate Consciences can heartily attribute to them Titles which imply some mighty Excellence they never once had the least shadow of in their Lives.

Nor is there any thing formidable in that Reason he gives *viz.* for fear lest the Man should come under the *Discipline of the Apron*; which either he is not, or else (as I am inform'd) his Governess was a great way off when he deliver'd this Discourse. If he be under such Discipline, he has doubtless had many a severe Curtain-Lecture for it since; tho' most are of opinion he is in very little Terror on that Account.

These comfortable, and easy things he has been insisting on, will, he tells us, facilitate the

Third Duty, which is to *obey them*, (which I confess is due to them that deserve to command) and here he does make a bold stroke at once, and tells us, That Subjection and Obedience unto Husbands is requir'd *as peremptorily as unto Christ himself*, P. 40. I thought the Authority of Husbands had been at least one degree inferior to the Authority of *Christ*; but see whither a Hot-brain, and insulting Temper will lead Men. The Authority of Husbands is as peremptorily asserted as the Authority of *Christ*! what else can be the meaning of it? A little more Modesty would have helpt him to another Interpretation of that place, *Submit yourselves to your Husbands as unto the Lord, Ephes. 5. 22.* Who does not see that 'tis meant so far as the Laws of Heaven require it, and in obedience to the Commands of *Christ*? So that if the Authority of Husbands be limited, and that of *Christ* not, I think Obedience is not requir'd so absolutely and peremptorily as to *Christ* himself; which he seems to be apprehensive of, and so drops the *Jus Divinum*, and very prudently owns that a Man is to go no farther than what comes within the compass of his Authority to command, P. 41. And here he says, That nothing but what is *contradictory to GOD's Laws, or impossible in it self, is excluded from the compass of a Husband's Authority.* A goodly Dominion certainly! for according to this Rule, a Woman (if a Husband pleases) is bound to do a thousand foolish and ridiculous things. If it be his Will and Pleasure, his House must be her Prison all the days of her Life, she must never speak a word but to him, she must never eat but what he leaves, and the Dogs and she may scramble for the Bones; or she may be oblig'd to carry his Cloak after him when he goes abroad, and save the charge of a Groom, by taking care of and rubbing down his Horse; and then upon the least disgust, she may be oblig'd to go barefoot twenty or thirty miles to some eminent Wood, and thence cut and lug home a bundle of sticks, each of which may be made use of as a *Pastoral Staff*, to discipline her Bones withal. These, and a multitude of other cruel and ridiculous things a Woman may be oblig'd to, because they are not impossible.

If it be reply'd, That these things, when impos'd, are contrary to the Divine Law; 'Tis all we desire to be granted. Then he tells us, That for a Woman to obey in what she thinks fit, falls *infinitely short of the Apostle's Intent*; Pag. 43. Whence again 'tis plain that he means (as any one may guess) that a Husband's Authority is unlimited, and infinite; for that must be infinite which another thing falls *infinitely short of*; tho' just before he had set limits to this boundless Authority. Then he seems to tell us, That Ignorance is the mother of all this *Female Devotion*, that a Woman must not use her Reason so far as to judge of the Laws that are pronounc'd to her: No! must obey by implicit Faith. This indeed, as he confesses, *seems difficult on the first view*; (and I dare say 'twill not seem easy on a second) yet for their comfort he tells them, that this is a conjunction with the two former, will be very easy and pleasant, and *will or should be sufficient to please their Husbands*, Pag. 44. Ay good Sir! no doubt on't, unless they are Men that fall infinitely short of the least share of Reason, Conscience and Humanity.

And here at last he tells us, That he'll dispense with the *Persian Shoo*, provided we will but once bring it in fashion to wear Ribbons on our Heads, with a *Love, Honour, and Obedience* woven into them. An excellent Invention, and for which (when it obtains) he will doubtless be mention'd with Honour to Posterity, as every one ought to be that invents any thing extraordinary.

Now he comes to the Improvement of the whole matter; and, first, he applies himself to the *Single Men, and the Unmarried*, and tells them what a fine time they'll have on't when they can persuade any willing Creatures to submit to their Yoke, and become their Servants for ever.

And here he runs out against *the wild and extravagant Inclinations* of the Women, and what those Inclinations are may be guess'd at from the Discourse all along. There is indeed a very strong Inclination in us for the preservation of those things call'd Reason, and the Liberty of Rational Creatures; which wild and extravagant Humour this Gentleman

demander would by all means have timely corrected as a thing that is altogether inconsistent with his most exalted Notions, and pious Designs: Yet in the mean time, I leave the World to judge whether he has not given an infinite scope to the most wild and exorbitant Inclinations of some Men; tho', as he says, they can *learn to command fast enough*.

And in his closing Periods (where he addresses himself to the Married) he seems a little to rack about, and endeavors to roll up his bitter Pill in a few Sugar'd Sentences, and bids the Men remember, *That our Duty is hard*, (most undoubtedly true, according to his Description of it) *our Frailty great*, and therefore our Task must not be made more *difficult than necessity does require &c.* *because they are* (says he to the H-yoke-fellows) *a part of your selves*. This is certainly all very good. But if it be so, and this be a Man's Duty, then hence I collect, That a Man goes beyond his Bounds when he imposes things unnecessary, tho' they be not impossible; which does not much resemble what he has told us, that nothing but vicious or impossible things are excluded from the compass (or the enchanted Circle) of a *Husband's Authority*. This makes me conclude that he would never have once mention'd the Mens Duty, when he tells them,

*They must bear with and pardon our Weakness;
And submit to many Inconveniences for our sake;
And interpose between us and Dangers;
And endeavour to promote our spiritual Good and Welfare.*

(Indeed I have heard of a *Roman Catholick* who attempted to persuade a *Protestant* that Marriage was a Sacrament, because it did administer Grace; and being demanded what Grace, replied, The Grace of *Repetance*. Now in this sense the obliging Husband that follow his Directions, may easily promote their Wives spiritual Good and Welfare; for I'll engage, that any Women of sense enough to distinguish between Liberty and Bondage, after they have been a while within the compass of such Husbands Authority, shall attain to the perfect Exercise of a most true and unfeigned *Repetance*.)

But

But these Duties of the Men he would, I suppose, never have mentioned, if it had not been for the sake of a most surprising witty Jest, which he designed to break, and leave with us for the Parting-blessing: It is this, That he must forbear Enlargement (he means on the Duty of Mankind) lest by overloading the Memories of the Women, he should cause them to forget that Duty which hath been set before them. He might very well have spared this Jest, with which he does conclude his pious and ingenious Discourse; for no doubt the Women will not forget him in haste, nor the Doctrine he has deliver'd, as he will certainly find, if ever he should have any occasion once more to attempt to persuade any one of them to renew the Experiment, how obliging and extraordinary a Husband he would prove.

Thus I have hastily consider'd this extraordinary Piece, in which, I suppose, the Author takes abundance of Pleasure and Satisfaction: But what could move him to vent such high-flown ranting stuff as we find here, I cannot imagin. If the *Parliament* were all of his Mind, we should have the *Salique Law* establish'd on this side the Water, tho' he scarcely hoped so great an Effect of his first Endeavors. But I suppose he was resolv'd, since what he had hitherto published had not made him so famous as he deserved, he would now do something that should for ever mark him to Posterity, and get him a Name, let it be what it will; as he that burnt the Temple of *Diana* at *Ephesus*, purely that the Memory of the Fact might eternize his Name. Or perhaps, he so dearly loves his present Consort, that he was resolv'd, should he lose her, never once to think of another; and to that end and purpose, hath done something to make it impossible for him to hope any other would ever smile upon him, or that he should read *Come, love me* in any of them. But I know not what he will say to justify the Reverence of the Pulpit, after he has preach'd a Sermon calculated to spoil the Gravity, and debauch the Devotion of a Saint. Those Persons that could refrain from a loud Laughter at many of his Periods, must have a greater degree of command over themselves than the Author has. Had he resolv'd to have talkt thus, the only time had been while he was slabbering the *Sack-potter*, or untying the Bride-Woman's Garters: And it looks the more awkward, because he has here and there mingled Gravity even to Terror, and ever now and then all the Levity and Buffoonry of one that harangues the People from a large wooden High-place at *Bartholomew Fair*; which in the Pulpit, I think, is not in its proper place. Such a Discourse might have pass'd well enough in *Spain* or *Muscovy* (where the Discipline of the Grabbetree is patiently suffer'd by the Women) and he lost a mighty opportunity in not transporting himself with the *Cæsar*. But the mischief on's is, that here in *England*, tho' he has done his endeavour to make it no more the *Paradise of Women*, yet there are many of the Men so generous that they were ashamed of his Design, and (as 'tis reported) earnestly persuaded him to let it die, and be buried in deserved Oblivion; but certainly one possess'd of such Notions is utterly beyond all Advice.

Notwithstanding all the good he may think he has done by the preaching and publishing this learned Sermon, I suppose it will not be very hard to prove that he has done some mischief by it: As, suppose he has caused

hereby several poor patient Creatures to be made *Masochites*, or to be maddell'd 2 or 3 times a-week more than usually: Suppose he has inflam'd the domineering Temper, and heighten'd the insulting Carriage of many a barbarous Husband. Why all this is nothing; they must thank their Mother *Eve* for it: Tho' in truth, if such Principles as his had never come abroad in the World, they might have escap'd tolerably well for all Mother *Eve*.

But however, the poor distressed Lady, for whom this was preach'd, is doubtless very much edify'd by it. To come from *Your humble Servant*, and *Yours to command*, tho' it be my Life, &c. to the *Persian Shoo*, and the New-fashion'd *Motto*, was a vast change. From the melting Accents of a desperate Lover, to the harsh Cadence of such rugged Sentences, and such threatening Pronouncements! From such *Prayer* to such *Preaching*, was a mighty Leap, and no doubt gave the poor tender Heart a most abominable Jolt.

'Tis very natural also, from this Discourse, to observe the vast alteration there is in some Men after they are sure of their Gape: Before-hand they'll do all the mean things in the World, and afterwards all the ungrateful and dis-ingenuous ones.

I am sure (whatever a Woman is antecedently oblig'd to) that when the Men shall promise and vow, when they shall protest by the most sacred things, that such shall be their Indulgence and Tenderness, as shall never give the least cause of Repentance; when they shall declare and swear to be for ever their Servants; they hereby oblige themselves beforehand to consider the Complaints that shall be made to them, if they are severe. So that in this sort of Tyranny, a Man not only violates Common Justice, but his own Vows and Obligations. This Gentleman knows the vast difference between [*Bright and Transcendental Madam*] to the *Persian Shoo*; between [*Yours to the Center of the Earth*, and your *Servant to the Antipodes*] and *Know your Lord and Master*.

Now those that are of this absolute and unlimited Gentleman's Mind, if they'll be penerous and honest, ought to tell the Ladies they address, what sort of Life they are like to lead, what sort of Bonds they are to come under, what vast Authority must be exercis'd, and that the very desires of their Hearts must be under government Masculine; and if after all this they'll come under *Male-administration*, and then complain, they are certainly the Persons most concerned in the Author's Discourse, and ought to consider it, and reap the benefit of it accordingly.

Thus I have cast away a few leisure hours on these Reflections which I have ventured to make, and done this Author an Honour he could not expect: And being engag'd in defence of the Sex, if he shall preach such another Sermon, I hope some generous Gentleman or other will save me the trouble, and let the World see, that even among his own Sex, there are some who are not partakers with him, but hate the mean and dishonourable Design with which he was certainly big, when he uttered so ungenteel and unmanly a Discourse.

EUGENIA

F I N I S

